000 was enough business to warrant the Council being called together. Then having taken the oath and signed the Register I found myself immediately leader of the "Opposition". None of us on either side of the Council had any experience of political work or of public speaking, except perhaps for one lawyer on the Unofficial side and the Attorney-General and the Director of Education on the Government side. These gentlemen were accustomed to speaking in the Court or in the lecture hall and classroom, but that was not quite the same thing as addressing a body of men who had no desire to listen to arguments presented purely in a legalistic manner or to be "lectured", however able the lecturer; so even these gentlemen held their peace, except during the Budget Meetings when our lawyer sometimes got rather carried away, occasionally to the embarrassment of his own side, a happening, so I am informed, not confined solely to Colonial Legislatures.

• 665 645 There were no political parties at that time in Aden, so that we none of us represented any particular political movement and were, for the most part, elderly gentlemen representative of our own communities in the Colony who had been nominated for our proven loyalty and solid worth, rather than for our [641] aptitude for politics or any particular intelligence. No attempt was made at that time to encourage the younger generation to take a responsible part in the government of the Colony. That was to come later when we had, all of us, more experience 645 and were more sure of ourselves. One of the main difficulties 563 that the Governor must have had in deciding who to nominate to represent the Arab majority of the population on the Legislative Council was that the official language of the Council was English and the common language of all the various committees was also English, and it was well-nigh impossible to find an able man of mature age among the Arabs who not only knew English but was prepared also to give up much of his time to public work. Immature lads there were, but no-one would have welcomed their appointment, least of all the more responsible members of their own community who would have had no faith in "children" as they termed them. Time was needed to mature the "children" and to accustom the grey-

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
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beards to seeing comparatively young men in positions of responsibility. In the meantime we held the fort and tried to build up a tradition of sober and gentlemanly conduct in the Council which would curb the impetuosity without breaking the spirit of the younger generation when in the fullness of time they joined us and replaced us.

As the leader of the Unofficial Members in the uneasy calm which had succeeded the Arab-Jewish riots in 1947, the line which I took then and continued to follow throughout my time on that side of the Council was that we were not in the usually accepted sense of the word an opposition. Although we were on the Unofficial side of Government we were jointly responsible with our official colleagues, for decisions taken in the Council which we had supported. It was not often that we raised our voice in opposition in the public meetings of the Council, because we preferred to reserve our criticism for the privacy of the Committee room, and sharp were some of the encounters which took place behind those closed doors. You may wonder why we should be unwilling to oppose Government openly in Council. The reason was that the temperament of people in the United Kingdom and the temperament of people in the Colonies is vastly different. In the United Kingdom very few people concern themselves unduly about the views of the Members of Parliament at Westminster, and verbal duels and quarrels in the Commons seldom, if ever, have the least effect upon public tranquillity. But Parliamentary Reports which are to be found on the minor and less important pages of only a few of the daily newspapers in this country often contain material which in a Colony, in the kindergarten stage of political development, would have a very unpleasant effect. In the Aden of ten years ago a really outspoken attack on the Government by the Unofficial Members would have had but one result; it would have undermined the authority of Government outside the Council Chamber, and in consequence there would have been a deterioration in security. At such a time this would have been serious. Government understood and respected our motives.

With the full approval of my Unofficial colleagues I summed

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up our attitude in the course of my Address to the Legislative Council in reply to the Governor's Address at the formal opening of the new Session in 1949. The Governor's Address comes on the first day of the new Session and by tradition the Senior Unofficial Member replies immediately after "Questions" on the second day. I had drafted and re-drafted my speech, and I tried to learn the beginning and the end by heart, but when eventually I found myself on my feet in the Legislative Council I cannot recall that ever before have I felt so frightened. I had often read in the reminiscences of important personages that when they made their maiden speech in the House of Commons they had wondered at first who it was that was speaking and whose was the strange voice that they were hearing. I had thought this a gross exaggeration, but when I started to speak myself on this occasion I realised the truth of the statement. My voice sounded most peculiar at first, but after a time I began to be really interested in what I was saying and ceased to be nervous, at least not panic stricken; and to be quite frank, towards the end of my maiden effort I was slightly pleased with the progress I was making, especially when I was, so to speak, on the last lap. On that occasion I used these words:

". . . On behalf of my colleagues I assure Your Excellency that we are proud to be associated with, rather I should say, to be a part of, the Government of this Colony and we will ever be ready to undertake any work for the benefit of the community which Your Excellency may decide to entrust to us. We realise our responsibilities and measures necessary for the security and well-being of the people of Aden will always have our support, for only by a united and strong Government can the peace and prosperity of the Colony be assured. . . ."

Two years later on a similar occasion I made the position plainer still when I said:

". . . Much that I say in my address reflects the views of all

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or the majority of my colleagues, not always, of course, for on occasion I find myself at variance with many of my friends on this side of the Council. These differences of opinion occur even when all the members of the minority party in an assembly such as this are of one political persuasion, but they are normally subordinated to the interests of the party and the opposition generally presents a united front. Here we are not all of the same political persuasion, nor are we an opposition; we are a definite part of the Government of the Colony and as such are responsible to the people of the Colony that we do our duty in furthering their legitimate aims and safeguarding their interests, while at the same time co-operating to the full with the Official Members in all measures which are to the benefit of the Colony as a whole, distasteful though they may be to some individuals. I know that our position is little understood outside this Council and that when the younger members of the public recall that we exist, which I am afraid is not often, they are inclined to look upon us as a collection of elderly gentlemen incapable of saying 'No', who, in return for an enhanced social prestige of rather doubtful value, collect together at the bidding of the Government and agree to everything. Very natural, even some Members of Government have been known from time to time to make the same mistake, but this conception is absolutely wrong and the sooner that is realised, the better. We have our duty to do and we do it however unpleasant it may be, and what is more, we do that duty in the appropriate place—in the privacy of our Committee Room where we can, on occasion, be very outspoken, possibly too outspoken.

"We are members of one family and it ill becomes family members to differ and bicker in public if it can be avoided. Such conduct more often than not only brings discredit on the parties to the dispute with a serious loss of family prestige. Settle your differences at home and face the world united should be our policy and it is one which might be adopted by many persons outside this Council with advantage."

Strange words for the leader of an "Opposition", but it was

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a strange place, and what may suit the British, whom no-one understands, does not *ipso facto* suit all the peoples of the Colonial territories.

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The Standing Finance Committee, to which I have referred, was composed then, as it is now, of all the Unofficial Members of the Legislative Council and only two of the Official Members, the Chief Secretary and the Financial Secretary, the former presiding. Here was a very heavy Unofficial majority in a very vital place, for the Standing Finance Committee controlled Government spending and carried out annually a detailed examination of the Colony Budget, a task which every spring entailed hours and hours of work and long and often acrimonious meetings, which always ended with an increase in mutual esteem. The Government men were able officials and good fellows, and you could have travelled far and long before you came upon a body of Unofficials more public spirited and less self-seeking.

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Gradually we all became more articulate, more experienced and more responsible in our actions and in our words. Our main platform was the expansion of education, the provision of adequate housing for the mass of the population, the provision of a good new civil hospital, and lastly, steady political development. It is curious that in those early days of the Legislative Council no-one clamoured in the Council for elections or for self-government, and we did not adopt the usual "run before you can walk" attitude of minority parties and extremists in some other Colonial Legislatures. It was not because we were apathetic, but rather, I suppose, because being older men than is usual in such institutions we were more alive to our own and other people's limitations and realised that we must learn our job before we could ask for promotion. At the same time we realised also that what was in one way our strength, for it indicated experience, was also our weakness, for some of us were too set in our ways to welcome change in a rapidly changing world. The yeast of youth was needed to leaven the experience of age, and I am glad to say that we did realise that, and in 1950 on behalf of my colleagues I stressed this point when I said:

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"At the same time I feel it my duty to say that we realise that in the not too distant future an awakening sense of responsibility among the younger members of the community may justify Your Excellency's successor in making changes in the membership on the Unofficial side of the Council. If and when that time comes, I shall have occasion to refer to this later, we will be very willing and ready to do all that we can to co-operate. The honour of office has its undoubted attractions, just as it has its responsibilities, but those, and we trust that you will consider us among them, who really have the good and well-being of the people of the Colony at heart do not need the spur of public office to induce them to sacrifice their time and sometimes interests for the good of the community."

These may have been the words of one man, but it must be realised that they were the sentiments of all the Unofficial Members who had approved these words at a private meeting held in my office some days earlier. It was a broad enough hint for anyone, but little did I realise then that they were, in fact, addressed to myself and that it was I who was destined to be His Excellency's successor.

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I am afraid that neither the Press nor the public were much interested in our work in the Council; there was nothing spectacular, it was not "news" and not even that section of the Press which was already beginning to write of self-government in a most uninstructed manner and to put forward the claims of Arabic to be recognised as an official language, took the trouble to be present at the Reporters' table during the ordinary meetings of the Council. This does not mean that editors and reporters were absent from the official opening ceremony of each new Session of the Council; this was our one gala day of the year when the Governor, in full uniform, complete with feathers in his hat, and wearing his Orders and Decorations, with guards of honour and salutes, formally opened the new Session and delivered "the gracious Address", after handing decorations to those whom His Majesty had been graciously pleased to honour. This was quite a different state

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2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
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204 of affairs; it was a spectacle, it was "news", and what was no
208 less attractive a social occasion of the first magnitude. The élite of Aden society were there and the editors were not left out, but when the tumult had died down and the multitude departed, the editors, who were often their own reporters, were found to have gone as well.

619 It must not be imagined that real feeling about the political
• [665] future of the Colony was non-existent. There were many people who were, in fact, seriously concerned, and a number of individuals looked forward to the time when they would be able to have a greater share in the control of their own affairs, but at that time there was nothing in the nature of a "party", as we understand the term in this country, inspired with nationalist ideas in any section of the community.

177 The Arab awakening was being accelerated by the rapid
668 educational developments in the Colony and by the radio; the
[204] first a good influence, the second poisonous to young minds
[208] with its half-truths, anti-British propaganda and reports of riots and students' demonstrations, which were such a feature of those years. The first phase of this awakening was the realisation that with few exceptions the worthwhile work in the Colony was in the hands of foreigners to Aden, and the younger generation began to wonder and to ask why strangers had the cream of the employment while they had to make do
464 with what was left. Mercifully the trade expansion after the war was creating fresh employment daily and there was work for every employable lad on leaving school, and I regret to say, very often before he should have left school. The murmuring did not go unheeded by the Unofficial Members of the Legislative Council and we warned Government that there would be trouble unless the rights of local men and women to priority in employment, provided they were capable of doing the work, were recognised both by Government and by the employers. The warning was heeded by Government, but not by some of the "foreign" employers who claimed, not without reason, that the local article was not up to the standard of the imported. These employers continued to take advantage of a surplus of semi-skilled workers in India, which had been

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
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houses. They are clannish and only of recent years have any of them taken any part in the public life of the Colony. The exception to this statement is the Bazara family, members of which have in the past and today given their services to the public in the municipal field and in the field of sport. 563

The third group are in much the same position as the Hadhramis, but being nearer home they pay more frequent visits to the Protectorate, and not having the Hadhramis business astuteness they are to be found more among the employees than the employers. They are of a generous disposition, and now that the educational disadvantage from which they suffered is fast disappearing, they are playing an ever increasing part in the life of the Colony.

The last group, the Yemenis, are a problem and fall clearly into two divisions, the manual workers who spend only a few months in the Colony at any one time and have in no way severed their ties with their homeland and the merchant class who may have become assimilated into the first group or are on the way to and wishful of being so, or who may have come to Aden because they are Sha'afis, or cautious persons and who, while not giving up their Yemen connection and business interests in any way, want to have an alternative source of income and place of residence in the event of trouble in their own land.

This then is the majority community in the Colony, and it is from this community that the political parties have been evolved with some assistance in their early days from individual members of the minority communities, and the Cairo radio in more recent times. [665]

Political parties came into being in Aden in much the same way as they have done in other parts of the world. People of similar views or recreations or occupations met together in the coffee shops and eventually had the idea of forming a Club. The Club became in time the resort of people with, broadly speaking, the same political ideas and so a Party was formed. 665

Aden has dozens of Clubs, but mercifully very few political Parties. Most of the Clubs are mushroom affairs that suddenly spring up over night all complete with President, Chairman, 575

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
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charity was directed into the right channel. There are exceptions, of course, and some Clubs have thrived and developed into very worth-while organisations which are indeed cultural and social. Often they combine their social activities with tennis or football or hockey, and these latter Clubs have done a very great deal of good. The Football Clubs are subject to the control of the Aden Sports Association, a purely unofficial organisation which came into being years ago as the Aden Football Association to control and encourage football in the Colony. It has fulfilled its purpose. Nowadays the existing Clubs of standing are mainly non-political; by which I do not mean that politics are not discussed—they certainly are—but that either the Club did not start as a political meeting place or that its main purpose is no longer political.

There are only three political parties in Aden. There never have been any more and originally there was only one, the Muslim Association. This organisation was inclined to be Pan-Islamic in outlook, which was not surprising because its moving spirit was for a long time an able and successful lawyer from Pakistan. Unfortunately for the Muslim Association the lawyer in question died in London when on his first visit to this country. After his death the Association lost most of its drive and has, from a political angle, become merged in the Aden Association.

The Aden Association is the main political party and is composed of the moderates. It came into being from the political side of the Muslim Association and the more mature of the Arab political leaders. By the middle of 1956 it was a comparatively well organised body whose political platform was, broadly speaking, internal self-government for the Colony. Up till then it had kept an open mind on the question of union between the Colony and the Protectorate. Some of the members would undoubtedly have liked to see some form of union, but I doubt if any of them would have been prepared to commit themselves publicly to a definite policy of union. They preferred to wait and see how the Protectorate developed both politically and economically before making any definite pronouncement. They are only too well aware

•665 They[1] are only too well aware *Aden*
[652] that while the Colony has an income of nearly four million pounds a year and pays its way with a high standard of educational and social development, the Protectorate with at least six times the population and twelve hundred times the area, has a possible income of about half a million pounds a year and would be unable without the annual subvention from Her Majesty's Government to maintain the very indifferent educational and social standard at present existing. This leaves out of all account the cost of maintaining security in the area and the heavy expenditure on frontier watch and ward. At present any union between the Colony and the Protectorate could not be described as an attractive business proposition, and the Aden Association has a number of shrewd business men among its members. The Aden Association has three elected members on the Legislative Council, all of them Arabs, and one other member of the Council (who is a Hindu) may be described as a collateral of the Association if he is not, in fact, a member which he may well be. My personal knowledge does not go beyond 1956 and by this time there may well have been some realignment among the Council members.

The next Party deserving of consideration is the South Arabian League which originally advocated union between the Colony and the Protectorate. It was never very strong and its policy was never very clearly defined. Unlike the Aden Association and that organisation's parent, the Muslim Association, it had some rather nebulous connection with the States bordering the Colony. Two or three years ago their platform underwent a fundamental change when some members began to advocate union with the Yemen as well as with the Protectorate, with the result that the more stable elements broke away and became independents.

The third Party is the National United Front whose stated policy is union with the Protectorate, the Yemen and the Sultanate of Muscat and Oman and the setting up of a South Arabian Independent State. This party is an amalgamation of the Nationalists who insist on independence and will be content with nothing less, the left wing of the South Arabian League and a few Free Yemenis who work for a more liberal form

[1] [i.e., the Aden Association. -Analyst]

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
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of government in their own country, the Yemen. The Free Yemenis were the back-bone of the 1948 revolution in that country. They feel that the removal of the Hamid-Ud-din dynasty from the throne of the Yemen and the substitution of a democratic, largely Sha'afi, form of government will remove the principal obstacle to eventual union between the two big South-west Arabian territories.

Where precisely the Sultan of Muscat comes into this picture is as much a mystery to me as it must be to his Highness who has probably never heard of the National United Front and would be quite unimpressed if he ever does become aware of its existence.

The Front has active members in the Protectorate, in particular in the State of Lahej, but is not quite as united as it used to be, as there has recently been a difference of opinion among the leaders on the important question of the banning of the importation of Qāt into the Colony. The leaders of the Front compare very badly with those of the Aden Association and their methods are not such as would commend their party to responsible people, though there is no doubt that they have a following among some sections of the Yemeni labour in the Colony and the more unstable elements of the local population. Nasser of Egypt has much the same support in the Cairo mob elements, and kind calls to kind on the Cairo radio. They are the only Party which has tried to make political capital out of strained labour relations, and there is no doubt that in the spring of 1956 they made a serious attempt to obtain control of the Trades Union. They failed then because the Trades Union leaders, though some of them were members of the Front, realised the danger to the Unions and refused to become subordinate to the leaders of the Front. I hope the danger of labour being so badly and fatally misled is now past and as experience is gained by the Trades Union leaders they will become even more unwilling in future, than they were in 1956, to become the pawns of any political party. Their primary role is in the field of labour relations and not in the political arena.

What it amounts to is that there are, in fact, two main

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
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• 665 political parties, both of whom advocate self-government. The Aden Association at present limit their demands to a degree of internal self-government, waiting to see what developments take place in the Protectorate in the future. They will try and get as much as possible, but they are not unreasonable, and common sense is not lacking in their leaders. The National United Front want complete independence and amalgamation with the Protectorate and the Yemen. They lack common sense and their leaders are irresponsible demagogues. Thus both Parties advocate independence in one form or another; the children are growing up.

000 Nationalism is to many Britons much the same as rebellion. They don't understand it and they treat Nationalists as they would treat people suffering from some disagreeable contagious disease. They feel that they are a danger to their fellows and therefore must be restrained if they cannot be cured. Many of us are inclined to behave like Victorian parents with rebellious children and have little or no sympathy with those who aspire to be independent. It is a pity but the attitude is understandable. We were last invaded nine hundred years ago and have long forgotten what it is like to be subordinate to a foreign power.

It is true to say that we have treated our subordinate territories well, in some cases, even generously, but that is not everything. They, all of them, yearn to be on their own, to be their own masters, and we, like an indulgent parent with a precocious child, are hurt, angry and mystified by their behaviour. It would be better for our future relations with these territories if we had suffered the indignity of foreign rule in more recent years and could call on our own experience for the key to what is to so many of us a mystery. Nationalism is not something new, something primarily anti-British nurtured in the Middle East and spread like a plague throughout the Colonies. It is something very natural and something which, in a different form, most of us have experienced personally ourselves. It is the desire of adolescence to stand alone, to make a break with the parental roof and be independent of parental control. We broke away from our father's house when we grew up, and our children will do precisely the same, when they

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
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178 to ensure ordered conditions in the Colony by a firm Govern-
666 ment policy while political changes were taking place, and at first to concentrate on the municipal field as a training ground for young men who were sufficiently public spirited to want to play their part in public affairs. The practice was introduced of nominating younger men to the Township Authorities, and in March 1953 the constitution of the Aden Township Authority was changed to allow for three of the members to be elected from the Township area and from April 1st of that year it was restored to the status of a municipality. Thus Aden came to have its first elections.

665 Careful thought was given to the qualifications of both
666 candidates and electors. There were plenty of people in the Colony who could qualify as candidates, but it was essential to encourage really good men to come forward, and this was done, with the result that the elections were a success from every point of view. They were well conducted and orderly, and resulted in three good men, all Arabs, being returned. Two years later the number of elected members was doubled.

641 A word about the electorate. It was essential in a place as politically immature as Aden that the franchise, while being reasonably wide, should not be too wide and certainly not universal. Only a small proportion of the population had ever voted before and they were all from overseas, either the United Kingdom or India. There were many Yemenis in the town, many of whom had a residential qualification, but comparatively few of whom were other than unskilled labourers, with no idea of the value of a vote and little real interest in Aden other than as a temporary home in which to make sufficient money to support their families in the Yemen. Property or income qualification was, therefore, insisted upon before a name could be inscribed on the electoral roll and in addition, residential qualifications for electors who were not Aden born.

Nothing would have been more ill-advised than to have given the ultimate power to people quite unfit to exercise it, who were easily swayed by political demagogues capable of passionate but irresponsible speech. The electoral net, therefore,